



# Plant perennial vegetation on ditch slopes or clean only one side of ditch each year



## What to do:

You can provide good wildlife habitat near water, eliminate noxious weeds, and save on ditch maintenance costs by planting perennial vegetation on ditch or levee slopes. It will take two-to-three years to establish permanent vegetation, during which time spot spraying or other management activities may be necessary. A combination of grasses and rushes of varying heights can be selected that provide good cover without impeding water flow.

In areas where siltation is a problem, it may not be feasible to plant self-sustaining perennial vegetation. In these cases, consider cleaning only one side of the ditch or levee slope each year. The vegetation on the remaining side can continue to provide wildlife habitat and, in most cases, should not interfere with water delivery operations.

If it is necessary to burn ditch slopes, try to delay burning until August, when nesting has been completed. Whenever possible, leave trees and shrubs that don't interfere with ditch maintenance activities. When applying herbicides, try to choose those that affect only broad leaved plants; the grasses that remain will support wildlife and help prevent ditch erosion.

## Regulatory agencies to contact:

Irrigation District.

## Benefits:

- Offers habitat for wildlife near water throughout the year.
- Stabilizes banks and reduces soil erosion.
- Can reduce ditch maintenance costs.

*Clean just one side of your ditches each year to help reduce maintenance expenses and provide habitat for waterfowl broods, ground-nesting birds, reptiles, and amphibians.*